## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated January 22, 2007. Claims 1, 4 to 8, 11 to 15 and 18 to 21 and 23 to 25 are pending in the application, with Claims 1, 8 and 15 having been amended and Claims 23 to 25 having been newly added. Claims 1, 8 and 15, all of which are independent, have been amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during an interview conducted on December 14, 2006. During that interview, the Examiner maintained the rejection of the claims. Furthermore, no agreement was reached regarding any additional claim amendments.

Claims 1, 4 to 8, 11 to 15 and 18 to 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,891,632 (Schwartz) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,665,425 (Sampath). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is directed to a print control method of a printer driver for performing print processing in an operation mode which is automatically determined from among a plurality of operation modes in response to a print request from an application program. The print control method comprises the steps of setting evaluation information indicating whether or not the operation mode is to be evaluated after printing; generating print data in an intermediate condition and temporarily storing the generated print data, wherein said print data generating step is responsive to the print request from the application program, and wherein the intermediate condition is independent of a particular page description language; analyzing the temporarily stored generated print data; determining the operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes based on a selection criterion and based on the analysis in said print data analyzing step; processing

the temporarily stored generated print data in accordance with the determined operation mode; displaying an evaluation screen for querying evaluation of a printing quality for the print processing, after the print processing of the print data is finished, in a case where the evaluation information set in said setting step indicates that the operation mode is to be evaluated; acquiring an evaluation result input by a user via the evaluation screen displayed in said displaying step; and updating the selection criterion for determining said operation mode based on the evaluation result acquired in said evaluation acquisition step so as to effect a next determination of the operation mode, wherein, in order to enable the user to selectively input the evaluation result, options consisting of a print quality is satisfactory option, a printing should be faster option, a print should be clearer option, and a printing should be more accurate option are displayed in said displaying step.

Claims 8 and 15 are respectively directed to an apparatus and a program substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 1.

Applicant submits that Schwartz and Sampath, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of Claim 1. Specifically, Schwartz and Sampath fail to disclose or suggest at the least the features of displaying an evaluation screen for querying evaluation of a printing quality for the print processing, after the print processing of the print data is finished, wherein, in order to enable the user to selectively input the evaluation result, options consisting of a print quality is satisfactory option, a printing should be faster option, a print should be clearer option, and a printing should be more accurate option are displayed in said displaying step.

Schwartz discloses distributing data to be printed between a host and a printer for processing. Although the determination of the distribution is automated, Schwartz allows a user to adjust the distribution based on user inputs. However, Schwartz

fails to disclose that the distribution is optimized based on the result of user's evaluation of the quality of the print output.

Furthermore, the cited portions of Sampath are seen to disclose that a diagnostic controller decides, based on an initial diagnosis, what test prints are to be scanned and what image quality parameters are to be determined and/or what defects are to be recognized and characterized. In addition, input may be obtained via a user interface 210 or 220, for characterizing the defects observed either in the test prints, or in the customer prints. This additional input from the user can be used to augment and/or verify the results of the image quality analysis module.

However, Schwartz and Sampath, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of Claim 1. Specifically, Schwartz and Sampath, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest at the least the features of displaying an evaluation screen for querying evaluation of a printing quality for the print processing, after the print processing of the print data is finished, wherein, in order to enable the user to selectively input the evaluation result, options consisting of a print quality is satisfactory option, a printing should be faster option, a print should be clearer option, and a printing should be more accurate option are displayed in said displaying step. That is, the combination of Schwartz and Sampath, which is not conceded as permitted by Applicant, may disclose a print data distribution system that is optimized and that the optimization may be improved by an image quality analysis module that relies on a user's characterization of print defects. However, the distribution is not driven by the user's explicit selection between four options, one of which indicates that the print quality is satisfactory, another option indicating that printing should be faster, another option

indicating that the print should be clearer, and a final option that the printing should be more accurate.

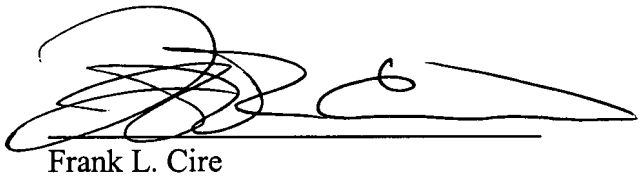
In light of the deficiencies of Schwartz and Sampath as discussed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claims 1, 8 and 15 are now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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